

Why I Matter Most!



Elizabeth Glaser
Pediatric AIDS
Foundation

Until no child has AIDS.



Project Summary

The Eswatini Ready, Resourceful, Risk Aware (Triple R) Project: OVC, Adolescent Girls, and Young Women (locally named Insika Ya Kusasa) aims to prevent new HIV infections and to reduce vulnerability among orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) in Eswatini. Insika Ya Kusasa helps HIV-negative OVC and AGYW stay HIV-free and supports those who are HIV-positive to lead healthy lives. To these ends, the project increases socio-economic resilience to the impact of HIV and uptake of high-impact HIV, sexual and reproductive health, family planning, and sexual and gender-based violence services among OVC and AGYW.

For more information about the project or Pact, the organisational lead for this project, please contact us:

Tel : +268 2404 5579

www.pactworld.org/country/eswatini/

Acknowledgements

This job aid was developed with technical assistance from the Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs (JHCCP) for Pact's Ready, Resourceful and Risk Aware (Triple R) Project. It was written by Lungile Dlamini-Zwane, Beth Deutsch and Nosisa Mkhwanazi, with technical support from Tyler Best and Jen Boyle, for Life Mentors in Eswatini to use with AGYW aged 15-29 in small group sessions and through one-on-one mentorship. Input was provided by Pact's Mphikeleli Dlamini, Chantelle Hulett and Nicole Miller and was further refined through feedback from pre-test focus group discussions with AGYW and Life Mentors.

Job aid themes and priorities were developed based on focus group discussions held in July 2019 with AGYW reached within the Insika programme and Life Mentors. An Innovations Workshop conducted with beneficiaries, Life Mentors and Field Officers in August 2019 further refined content and approach for new job aids, and are intended to reference key content and messages covered from previous Insika job aids.

Key inspiration for messages for this job aid reflect the voices of AGYW and Life Mentors within the Insika programme. The activities in this job aid were also adapted from a paper reviewing existing curricula titled "A Proposed Self-Esteem and Body Image Curriculum for Middle School-Aged Girls", Rachel McIntyre Jern, MPH, University of Pittsburgh, 2015. It is also supported by online content from <http://goodlifezen.com/35-things-that-make-you-special/> and a video from the Dove Self Esteem Project: Real Beauty Sketches: You're More Beautiful Than You Think, found on <https://youtu.be/XpaOjMXyJGk>

Disclaimer

This job aid is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), under the terms of Award No. 72067418CA00007. The contents are the responsibility of Pact and Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs (JHCCP) and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID, PEPFAR, or the United States Government.

CONTENTS

DISCUSSION GOALS

To strengthen AGYW's self-esteem and sense of value or worth and reassert personal dreams and goals.

DISCUSSION TOPICS AND ACTIVITIES

Reflections (5 minutes)

Activity 1: Being Unique (15 minutes)

Activity 2: I Am Worth It! (20 minutes)

Activity 3: Crinkle Heart (*Fohlota Inhlitiyo*) (15 minutes)

Homework Activity (3 minutes)

Wrap-Up (2 minutes)

Note to mentor:

By end of session, AGYW should have:

- ✓ Understanding that we are all unique and that is what makes us special
- ✓ Knowledge of a few of the special things that make us unique
- ✓ Understanding that they don't have to spend time with people who don't make them feel good about themselves.
- ✓ Agreement on next meeting

DISCUSSION LENGTH | 1 hour

KEY TO ACTIVITY PLANNING



Activity Objectives



Activity Time



Materials Needed

Getting Started

- ✔ Greet AGYW and welcome them back to the Insika Ya Kusasa session.
- ✔ Ask AGYW to sit comfortably in a circle. Sit in the circle with the group. Everyone should be at the same level, including yourself. *(If having a one-on-one session, just sit facing each other with the AGYW.)*
- ✔ Thank the AGYW for coming.
- ✔ Ask a few volunteers *(or the one AGYW, if having a one-on-one session)* to quickly share something good that has happened to them since the last session.

Reflection

- ✔ Ask participant(s) to talk about what they learnt from the last session. Gently correct any wrong information without embarrassing the person giving it.

Introduce Mentorship Topic

- ✔ Explain that we are going to start this session with a discussion of what makes each of us different or unique.

ACTIVITY 1: Being Unique



To help AGYW understand what makes each of them special



15 Minutes






None

Tell the AGYW to close their eyes for a moment and think of their closest friend, sister or any other close relative.

Say: With your eyes closed, I want you to think of what makes this person different from any other person you know. Now, open your eyes so we can discuss your thoughts on what makes this person different.

If these do not come up, probe using the following examples:

-  What makes you recognise their voice when you hear it even before you see them? *(Ask 1 or 2 AGYW to share their thoughts, then share the following possible answers if they do not come up: its quality and just the way it sounds is theirs alone)*
-  What unusual/strange habits do they have that you recognise as just theirs alone? *(Ask 1 or 2 AGYW to share their thoughts, then share the following possible answers if they do not come up: it could be the way their left eyebrow lifts when they think or smile; the way they tilt their head to the right when interested in something you're saying, etc.)*
-  What imperfections do they have? *(Ask 1 or 2 AGYW to share their thoughts, then share the following possible answers if they do not come up: it could be a crooked tooth, an uneven nose, a folded-looking ear, a loud/annoying laugh, talkativeness, etc.)*

- ▼ What makes you so close to this person? (Ask 1 or 2 AGYW to share their thoughts, then share the following possible answers if they do not come up: *their kindness, the way they listen without judging, their laugh or smile, etc.*)

Say: Some of these answers are what make a person unique or different from the rest. For example, we are born with a particular voice and its quality and just the way it sounds makes it recognisable as yours alone. For example, Nelson Mandela's voice is recognisable the world over.

Ask: Is there anyone who can imitate Nelson Mandela's voice? If someone is willing to volunteer, ask them to show how she can speak like Mandela. (*If having a one-on-one session, ask the AGYW if she can imitate the way Nelson Mandela speaks. It's okay if she's not comfortable doing that.*)

Say: Even though Mandela's voice is unique to him, it can be developed – as actors and others have proven; however, none can speak like him all their life because they are just not Nelson Mandela. What is your unique voice like?

Your appearance, combined with some of your strange habits and behaviours, can be the things that people enjoy about you and they are what make you unique and special.

Then say: No two people are exactly the same. Even identical twins have certain things that are only unique to them; for example, their fingerprints can never be the same. Each of us is on a unique life path. Which path we follow describes a part of our uniqueness.

What makes us truly special is how we spend our energy, thoughts and time, as well as how we respond to whom and what we encounter.

It's in your power to grow and show the unique, special person that you are.

Now that we recognise our uniqueness and the fact that our differences are the things that make us special, I would like us to discuss more about our worth.

ACTIVITY 2: I Am Worth It!



To strengthen AGYW's self-esteem and sense of worth to help them understand their value



20 Minutes



Dove video, paper, coloured markers and plastic bag

Step 1: While sitting in a circle (*or facing each other, if having a one-on-one or much smaller group session*), tell the AGYW to take about 2 minutes getting to know each other with the person sitting on their right by asking each other what they like doing in their spare time, what they like to eat, to watch, play, or listen to, or what they like about themselves, and why.

Step 2: After the 2 minutes is up, ask each pair to now take turns complimenting each other.

One girl compliments the other, the girl says thank you, and other compliments her back.

Stress the importance of giving genuine compliments on things you like, appreciate or admire about the other person. (*If having a one-on-one session you (Mentor) and the AGYW will take turns complimenting each other until you run out of compliments. If having a much smaller group, the AGYW can do two rounds of complimenting each other.*)

Step 3: Then, ask the AGYW to share how it felt to give and receive compliments.

Step 4: Say: Now, I would like us to watch a video from Dove before we continue further with our discussions. The video is an experiment that was done to show the difference between how we see ourselves and how others see us.

Show the Dove video (found on <https://youtu.be/XpaOjMXyJGk>)

After the video ends, ask the following:

- ❑ What did we learn from the video? (*Listen to AGYW, then emphasise the following*)

Possible answers: Learned that we are usually too harsh on ourselves and how we look, which may be due to lack of self-esteem, yet to other people who meet us, there is always something beautiful and special in each of us. We are so much better than we think!

Step 5: Say: Now, I'd like you to partner with the same person as in the last activity and both of you should take 2 minutes and think about, then write down on a piece of paper, honestly, three things (about your face and your body) that you think when you look in the mirror. *(If having a one-on-one session, you (Mentor) should partner with the AGYW or if there is any girl that does not have a partner.)*

(If, as a Life Mentor, you know of any AGYW in the group that may not be able to write, make sure she is paired with someone who can so the other girl can do the writing, taking care that she does not feel embarrassed or pressured to write. She will still learn something from the discussion.)

Collect the pieces of paper and put them in a plastic bag. Mix the pieces of paper and then take out one piece of paper at a time and read it.

Read each note, then ask:

- ❑ Do you think this statement is **positive**, **negative**, or **in the middle**? Why do you think that?

Say: As we have already discussed what we learned from the Dove video and from the exercise we have just done, we are often too harsh on ourselves when it comes to beauty, but who decides what is beautiful and whether beauty is internal or external?
As we have learnt, we are actually much more beautiful than we think.

Step 6: In the next exercise, ask the AGYW to partner with the AGYW next to them.

- ▽ Share one challenge they have faced in the past and successfully overcome. Give each AGYW one minute to share with the other, totaling two minutes for the exercise. *(If having a one-on-one session, you (Mentor) should partner with the AGYW or any girl in a group that does not have a partner.)*
- ▽ Ask each AGYW to share what the other has told them, remembering to clap for each AGYW's achievement. *(If having a one-on-one session, share your own challenge that you managed to overcome and then let the AGYW share. Remember to clap for her or give her "a high five" for successfully getting past a challenge.)*

Say: From this exercise, I want us to recognise that everybody has their strengths, which are positive qualities that we should recognise in each of us and be proud of. This is why no one should ever look down on you because you deserve to be respected. That is your right and you're worth it!

- ▽ Do we remember our rights from "Getting The Love I Deserve"? *(After listening to AGYW, if not mentioned, remind AGYW of these rights: right to physical safety, right to respect from others, right to opportunity to make your own decisions, and the right to control over your sexuality – when and with whom to have sex, without being forced.)*

ACTIVITY 3: Crinkle Heart (*Fohlota Inhlitiyo*)



To help AGYW see the power of words and the damage hurtful words can have on them, and recognise the need to put their wellbeing first and get out of situations where they are constantly hurt or put down, if necessary



20 Minutes



Heart-shaped pieces of paper for every AGYW

Step 1: Say: I want each of us to think of one word or a phrase that HURTS that we have heard being said to someone else or to us. *(Mentor must ask AGYW to share these words or phrases and she should write down at least 5 of them on a piece of paper.)*

Next, I want us to think of one word or a phrase that MAKES US FEEL GOOD. *(Mentor must ask AGYW to share these words or phrases and she should write down at least 5 of them on a piece of paper.)*

Step 2: Now, hand out a piece of heart-shaped paper to each AGYW.

Say: Let's look at this heart that I have handed out to you. I want us to imagine that this, in your hands, is your precious heart.

Now, we will use these words that you gave me to play a game called Crinkle Heart (*Fohlota Inhlitiyo*). I will read out one word that HURTS at a time. For each word that hurts that I read, you must crush or crumple (*fohlota*) the heart a little. *(Read out one word/phrase that hurts at a time and pause to ask why that hurts, then discuss briefly.)*

Note to mentor:

If it happens that an AGYW starts showing signs of being affected by the hurtful words mentioned, for example, you see her crying, getting angry, being withdrawn, take a short break and ask one of the AGYW to lead a fun energiser. If there is crying and serious anger displayed, you can take the opportunity to take the affected AGYW aside to speak to her and ensure that she's okay.

Next, I will read out one word at a time that MAKES YOU FEEL GOOD. For each word that feels good that I read, you must try to smooth out the heart a little. *(Read out one word/phrase that feels good at a time and pause to ask why that feels good.)*

Ask: Do we see that, even after the heart is smoothed out, wrinkles remain? What does this tell us *(listen to the AGYW's views)*

Say: This shows that words have a lasting impression. Let us, therefore, pay attention to hurtful words that are said to us. Now that we know the permanent damage that such words can have on our hearts and, therefore, our self-esteem, we should be able to recognise when we are being put down and should not tolerate such. If you're being constantly hurt or put down in a relationship, find a way to get out of it. You are worth so much more and should not accept anything else!

Ask: Now, who normally says such hurtful words to us? Do we also say hurtful words to others? *(listen to the AGYW's views)*

Say: Let us also be careful of the words we say to others or one another. We are sisters and should support one another instead of bringing each other down. We all have ups and downs, but with support from each other or other people we identify as supporters, because they truly care about us, we can stand and achieve our goals. The important thing is to know that YOU matter most!

Step 3: Say: Now I'd like all of us to stand up and find a partner (*the Mentor should partner with the AGYW if having a one-on-one, or with any AGYW that doesn't have a partner*). Face your partner and hold each other's right hand. We will now make some statements of self appreciation.

The girls should keep their hands lifted up above their heads as you, the Mentor, read out each statement of affirmation for them to repeat loudly and victoriously.

Statements:

- ▼ I am who I am, no one else is like me!
- ▼ I am enough! I am beautiful! I am me!
- ▼ I have a right to be treated with respect and dignity!
- ▼ Even if I depend on you, I'm still worthy of respect and love!
- ▼ Even if I was once raped, I still matter and am worthy of respect and love!
- ▼ Even if I'm living with HIV, I still matter and can achieve my goals!
- ▼ No matter what I am or what I have been through, I matter!

Take-Home Activity

For your homework, I would like you to practice some self-appreciation. Stand in front of a mirror at home every morning and say to yourself: **“I am enough! I am beautiful! I am special! I am worthy of love and respect!”** If, for some reason, you do not feel much love for yourself or blame yourself for some mistake(s) you might have made in the past, before appreciating or complimenting yourself, look at yourself in the mirror and start with these words: **“I’m sorry! Forgive me! I love you!”** Say these words to yourself every morning, until you find it easier to compliment yourself and truly believe that, indeed, you are special and worthy of love and respect.

Afterwards, draw a flower on a piece of paper and write one quality you love about yourself (an appreciation of self) on each petal. Keep these statements as a constant reminder that you are special and you have strengths.

Go back to the goals you developed with your Mentor during one-on-one sessions after Job Aids 1 and 2. Try to identify where you can use your strengths to help you achieve your goals. Write this down as steps you can take towards achieving your goals.

KEY MESSAGE

- ▼ We are all unique and our differences are what make us special.
- ▼ We all have strengths that we should be proud of and use to achieve our goals.
- ▼ We should know our worth and be able to identify when to get out of situations or relationships where we are constantly hurt or put down because we are worthy of respect and love.

WRAP UP

1. Thank AGYW again for coming. Ask each AGYW to mention one thing that they have learnt today and one thing that they are looking forward to applying in order to remind themselves that they matter most.
2. Ask if there are any more questions about today's discussions that anyone would like to ask.
3. Agree on and remind AGYW of the time and place for the next meeting and say you look forward to seeing them all again there.

The End.

Next Step: Schedule one-on-one Mentorship Meetings

WHY I MATTER MOST!

Specific probing questions for one-on-one mentorship or follow-up to session:

- ▼ How do you feel about yourself?
- ▼ Do you consider yourself as confident or not? Why?
- ▼ What steps do you think you need to take in order to become more confident, and how can I help you?
- ▼ If your heart feels a little crumpled, do you have someone you can talk to?

Key Checklist of Next Steps For Mentorship Support:

- ▼ Organise for one-on-one so she can talk to someone more about her particular problem.
- ▼ Suggest she joins the Insika Social Media sites (*WhatsApp, Facebook, as well as U-Report*) where she can engage with other AGYW on these and other issues or ask questions in an anonymous way.
- ▼ Remind her of specific services offered that she might need (*these could be contraceptives, PrEP, condoms, post GBV care, OVC support*).
- ▼ As a Mentor, always refer to content from specific job aid done previously, if a related situation comes up. (*E.g. My Needs and Priorities, Getting the Love I Deserve, etc.*)

Always watch for key warning signs for immediate intervention

- ▼ If you notice that your mentee is struggling with something or going through some challenge(s), make it a point to have more frequent follow-ups with her.

You should:

- ▼ Reassure her that she is not alone and that you are there to help her.
- ▼ Help her to identify other options and supporters in her community.
- ▼ Get help from trained counsellors and service providers from Insika.
- ▼ Commit to continued support by phone or visits.

Check Your Mentee's Progress Towards Meeting Goals and Actions that were set during Job Aids 1 and 2:

- Let's review your Goals and Actions.
- Have you taken any steps to reach those goals?

ACTION STEP for LM:

- Mark any completed goals in mobile tool/phone as "COMPLETE", "NOT STARTED" if it hasn't started, or "ONGOING" if it has started but is not complete.
- Find out why the goals are not complete and address any needs for linkage.

REFERENCES

The Insika Job Aids are evidence-based materials drawn from formative research with AGYW and Life Mentors reached through the Insika programme and further refined through joint development of themes and content through an Innovations Workshop. The methodologies used are drawn from well-known behavioural theories and adapted curricula. Two key theories provide the foundation for curricula design: Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory – which proposes that people learn new behaviours and identify their own strengths and self-efficacy when they see them modelled in others and Paolo Friere's Empowerment - Education model, which states that knowledge comes not from “experts” but rather, group discussions and knowledge people have from within themselves and their communities.

The job aids are meant to be used as a package in conjunction with a mentorship guide that outlines targeting based on age profiles, key content and participatory methodologies based on USAID mentorship curricula, as well as a simplified mentorship process and template. Specific reference is made to priority Insika job aid themes previously covered for further discussion on issues that come up through mentorship discussion. Highlighted job aids referenced in Why I Matter Most include Insika's Job Aid 1: My Needs and Priorities and Job Aid 4: Getting the Love I Deserve.

While the issues tackled in this job aid have not been previously extensively dealt with through evidence-based SBC materials, where possible, every effort was made to engage existing curricula which are based on these models. Tested experiential techniques were reviewed and specific activities adapted to AGYW in the Eswatini context. Additional new content was developed to enhance individual mentorship plan development and mentorship sessions. Detailed references are provided below for each activity source and adaptation.

Activity 1: Being Unique: original content drawn from Innovation Workshop with some content adaptations from <http://goodlifezen.com/35-things-that-make-you-special/>

Activity 2: I Am Worth It! adapted from a review of various existing curricula in a paper called “A Proposed Self-Esteem and Body Image Curriculum for Middle School-Aged Girls”, Rachel McIntyre Jern, MPH, University of Pittsburgh, 2015; with some inspiration from the Dove Self Esteem Project: <https://www.dove.com/us/en/dove-self-esteem-project.html>, including a video from Dove's Real Beauty Sketches: You're More Beautiful Than You Think, found on <https://youtu.be/XpaOjMXyJGk>

Activity 3: Crinkle Heart: adapted from a paper reviewing various existing curricula called “A Proposed Self-Esteem and Body Image Curriculum for Middle School-Aged Girls”, Rachel McIntyre Jern, MPH, University of Pittsburgh, 2015 (activity originally from Girls Only! Toolkit <https://www.sdcca.org/office/girlsonlytoolkit/>)

Take Home Activity: Concept adapted from Grass Roots Soccer AMAA SKILLZ Toolkit (2016)

INSIKA YA KUSASA JOB AID SET DEVELOPED FOR AGYW (15-29) MENTORSHIP SESSIONS

